REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants note that an acknowledgment of the receipt and consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed on December 11, 2003 has not been received. As an indication of consideration of the references cited in the IDS, Applicants respectfully request an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 that accompanied the IDS.

Applicants have amended the Specification, including the Abstract, to place it in better form and to correct for grammatical errors. No new matter has been added.

With regard to the Examiner's objection noted in paragraph no. 6 of page 3 of the Office Action, Applicants have the following comments. Applicants submit that the Examiner misinterpreted the description of Figure 1 by stating that the light L3 is normal to light L4. In contrast, the polarized direction of light L3 and the polarized direction of light L4 are normal to each other. In Applicants' FIG. 1, the single-sided arrow connected with L3 via a leader line represents the transmitted light L3 itself. The single-sided arrow connected with L4 via a leader line represents reflected light L4 itself. FIG. 1 shows that the transmittal light L3 and the reflected light L4 are parallel each other propagating opposite directions.

The polarized directions of the transmitted light L3 and the reflected light L4 are represented by a double-sided arrow with a broken line in FIG. 1. Namely, the polarized direction of the transmitted light L3 is represented by the double-sided arrow that intersects

the single-sided arrow of the transmitted light L3 itself. The polarized direction of the reflected light L4 is represented by the double-sided arrow located below the single-sided arrow of the reflected light L4 itself. FIG. 1 clearly shows that the polarized direction of the transmitted light L3 and the polarized direction of the reflected light L4 are normal to each other.

Claims 1-4, 7 and 10-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,712,694 to Taira et al. Claims 3 and 4 have been cancelled, thereby rendering this rejection moot with respect to these claims. However, with respect to Claims 1, 2, 7 and 10-12, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 1 and 10 have been amended to include the light source (with the pillar shaped light guide, the spot light emission source and the reflecting layer) originally defined in dependent Claim 5, which has now been cancelled, without prejudice. As correctly acknowledged by the Examiner on lines 5-6 of page 6 of the Office Action, the Taira et al. reference fails to disclose this type of light source. Accordingly, as all of the features of independent Claims 1 and 10 are not disclosed in the Taira et al. reference, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this §102 rejection under Taira et al. of independent Claims 1 and 10 and associated dependent Claims 2, 11 and 12.

With regard to independent Claim 7, Applicants respectfully submit that the Taira et al. reference fails to disclose a lighting device that includes, *inter alia*, a light source unit that "emits linearly polarized light." In other words, the light source of Claim 7 includes

a function of phase separation. By using the light source unit having such a function, the polarization separation element is unnecessary. Accordingly, bright liquid crystal display devices with a smaller number of members can be realized. This technical feature of the light source unit is described in detail in the tenth embodiment (Figures 11 and 15A-15C) of the present invention.

The Taira et al. reference does not disclose all the features of the present invention according to Claim 7. The light source disclosed in Taira et al., such as a cold cathode fluorescent tube, only emits non-polarized light. Due to such a nature of the light source, it is necessary in Taira et al. to combine the phase modulation element with the polarization separation element.

Accordingly, Taira et al. fails to disclose all the features of the present invention according to Claim 7. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this §102 rejection of independent Claim 7.

Claims 5, 6, 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,712,694 to Taira et al. in view of Japanese Publication No. 2000-292786 to Takeshi et al. (hereinafter JP '786). Applicants have cancelled Claims 5 and 6, without prejudice, and have incorporated the subject matter of Claims 5 and 6 into independent Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants will respond to the rejection as applied to Claims 1, 8 and 9. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As correctly acknowledged by the Examiner on lines 5-6 of page 6 of the Office Action, the Taira et al. reference fails to disclose a light source with a pillar shaped light guide, a spot light emission source and a reflecting layer, as mentioned above. Accordingly, to remedy this deficiency, the Examiner relied upon JP '786. However, as discussed below, even if JP '786 is combined with the Tiara et al. reference, all of the claimed features of Claim 1 are not disclosed or suggested in the proposed combination.

In the present invention according to Claim 1, the pillar-shaped light guide has the reflecting layer (corresponding to the reflecting layer 57 in the embodiments) disposed on the second surface of the pillar-shaped light guide opposed to the first surface at which light exits. The second surface on which the reflecting layer is disposed is of a prism surface.

On the other hand, JP '786 does not disclose the reflecting layer disposed on the second surface, but discloses the reflecting member covering the backside surface and the side surfaces adjacent to the backside surface. Since light passes through the prism surface of the backside twice in the device of JP '786, the efficiency of light reflection is very low, and thus the light source disclosed in JP '786 is of no practical use. To the contrary, in the present invention according to Claim 1, the second surface of the pillar-shaped light guide with the reflecting layer disposed on realizes the high efficiency of the light reflection, since light is reflected by the reflecting layer without passing the second surface twice.

Therefore, even if JP '786 discloses the spot light emission source as the Examiner indicates, it is clear that the present invention according to Claim 1 would not have

been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this §103 rejection of independent Claim 1.

With regard to the §103 rejection of dependent Claims 8 and 9, these claims refer back to independent Claim 7, and therefore include all of the features of independent Claim 7. As described above, the Taira et al. reference fails to disclose all the features of the present invention according to Claim 7. JP '786 also fails to disclose or suggest the technical feature of the present invention according to Claim 7 that the light source emits linearly polarized light.

Therefore, it is clear that the present invention according to Claims 8 and 9, which are dependent from Claim 7, would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, even if JP '786 discloses the spot light emission source as the Examiner indicates. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this §103 rejection of Claims 8 and 9.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference

would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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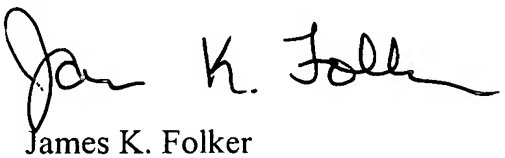
By 

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